

SEP 20 2006

AO1568

Amendment and Response

September 20, 2006

AMENDMENT

In the Claims:

Please amend instant claims 1 and 8, and cancel instant claims 11-19, as follows:

1. (currently amended) A curable aqueous composition comprising
 - (a) a polyacid comprising at least two carboxylic acid groups, anhydride groups, or salts thereof;
 - (b) a polyol comprising at least two hydroxyl groups; and
 - (c) an emulsion polymer comprising, as copolymerized units, greater than 30% by weight, based on the weight of said emulsion polymer solids, ethylenically unsaturated acrylic monomer comprising a C₅ or greater alkyl group;wherein the ratio of the number of equivalents of said carboxylic acid groups, anhydride groups, or salts thereof to the number of equivalents of said hydroxyl groups is from 1/0.01 to 1/3, and wherein said carboxylic acid groups, anhydride groups, or salts thereof are neutralized to an extent of less than 35% with a fixed base.
2. (original) The curable aqueous composition of claim 1 wherein said polyacid is an addition polymer comprising at least one copolymerized ethylenically unsaturated carboxylic acid-containing monomer.
3. (original) The curable aqueous composition of claim 1 wherein said polyol is a compound with a molecular weight less than 1000 bearing at least two hydroxyl groups.
4. (original) The curable aqueous composition of claim 3 wherein said polyol is a hydroxylamine selected from the group consisting of diisopropanolamine, 2-(2-aminoethylamino)ethanol, triethanolamine, tris(hydroxymethyl)aminomethane, and diethanolamine.

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5. (original) The curable aqueous composition of claim 1 wherein said emulsion polymer is present in an amount of from 1% to 20%, by weight based on the sum of the weight of the polyacid and the weight of the polyol, all weights being taken on a solids basis.

6. (original) The curable aqueous composition of claim 1 further comprising a Phosphorous-containing species.

7. (original) The curable aqueous composition of claim 1 further comprising from 0.5% to 20% by weight, based on the solids content of said emulsion polymer, surfactant having an HLB value of greater than 15.

8. (currently amended) A method for treating a substrate comprising:

(a) forming a curable aqueous composition comprising admixing

(1) a polyacid comprising at least two carboxylic acid groups, anhydride groups, or salts thereof;

(2) a polyol comprising at least two hydroxyl groups; and

(3) an emulsion polymer comprising, as copolymerized units, greater than 30% by weight, based on the weight of said emulsion polymer solids, ethylenically unsaturated acrylic monomer comprising a C₅ or greater alkyl group;

wherein the ratio of the number of equivalents of said carboxylic acid groups, anhydride groups, or salts thereof to the number of equivalents of said hydroxyl groups is from 1/0.01 to 1/3, and wherein said carboxylic acid groups, anhydride groups, or salts thereof are neutralized to an extent of less than 35% with a fixed base, and

(a) contacting said substrate with said curable aqueous composition; and

(b) heating said curable aqueous composition at temperature of from 120 °C to 400 °C.

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9. (withdrawn) The method of claim 8 wherein said substrate is a heat-resistant fiber or a heat-resistant nonwoven formed therefrom.

10. (withdrawn) A heat-resistant nonwoven prepared by the method of claim 9.

11-19. (canceled)